

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSN INC

PO BOX 33710, TAKAPUNA, AUCKLAND 9

NEWSLETTER No 53

March 1987

A registered publication

SUBSCRIPTIONS: The President and Executive wish to thank all those who promptly paid their subs as notified in Newsletter No 52, particularly those who paid in advance or who made donations over and above their normal dues. It is fairly certain subs will go up again in November, but those paid in advance will escape any increase for the period they originally cover. If you have paid ignore reminder below:

To be financial to 31 Dec 87 you owe us S. ³⁻⁰⁰..... Please forward to Secretary at above address as soon as possible.

LAST POST:
34119 D.L. (Dave) George, 7 Sep 86, at Christchurch.
J. (Jack) Bingham, 27 Nov 86 at Christchurch.
W.A. (Bill) Dodd, 23 Jan 87, at Auckland.
35146 L.G. (Les) Byers, 10 Mar 87, at Hastings.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS: Brig R.J. Andrews OBE to 22 Burley Rd, Wimbledon, London SW 195 BH.

WO1 P.R. Anderson to Headquarters, Papakura Camp.
M.G. Bell to 12 Kenilworth Place, Hamilton.
T. Brown to 14 Tekoa Rd, Panmure, Auckland 6.
Lt Col P.J. Calvert to Lot 1, Brush Rd, Wamberal, NSW 2260, Australia.
Lt Col W.E. Colton to 1/49 Hanene St, St Heliers, Auckland 5.
B.W. Culhane to 2 Stanley Rd, Glenfield, Auckland 10.
P.J. Duggan to 82A Matipo St, Riccarton, Christchurch 4.
B.R. Edmonds to Mandalay Ave, Nelly Bay, Magnetic Is, Q'land 4816.
Nageeb J.C. Hacon to 1st Regt, Sultan of Oman's Artillery, PO Box 1724 CPO, SEEB, OMAN.
Major J.S. Heard to 166 Carlisle Rd, Browns Bay, Auckland 10.
Brig G.A. Hitchings MBE to c/o 1/2 Tiri View, Torbay, Auckland 10.
Major R.H. Manson to 1/19 Butley Drive, Farm Cove, Pakuranga.
Bdr H. Meeuwssen to 3 Fd Regt RNZA, Burnham Camp.
Lt Col R.J. Martin to McDonald Rd, RD2, Whakatane.
Lt Col A.J. Rivers to 6 Gower St, Trentham.
Major J. McL. Ross to 143 Kauri Rd, Whenuapai.
Major T.G. Roche to 204 Vogel St, Palmerston North.
Major R.J. Wasson to 135 Walter Strevens Dr, Conifer Grove, Takanini, A.K.
R.N. Wylde to 1/13 Ranfurly St, Upper Hutt.
R.A. Williamson: address should read 61 Martin Rd, Paraparaumu, NOF 16.
Sgt M.T. Hotene to HQ Coy, 1 TF, Papakura Camp.

NEW MEMBERS: 1959 W.P. (Bill or 'Bovo') Beveridge, 1 Oriana Cres, Bellvue, Tauranga.
1896 R.C. (Reg) Walker, 20A Edgewater Grove, Orewa.

RESIGNATIONS: H48031 Capt C.M. Gregory RNZAOC, wef 2 Feb 87
R.V.G. Wilson wef 5 Feb 87.

AMENDMENTS TO NEWSLETTER 52: To list of members apologising for non-attendance at AGM add: Col H.I. Jones, R.J. Gunn.

In Phil George's poem Part 1 verse 2 line 2 delete 'Whose', substitute 'Where'; In Part 2, verse 4 line 2 delete 'Or' substitute 'On'.

161 BATTERY REUNION of personnel who served in the Bty from 1950 to 1987 is to be held over the week-end 15-16 August 1987. For further details those interested should contact BSM, 161 Bty, Papakura Camp.

GONE NO ADDRESS:LAST KNOWN ADDRESS OR LOCALITY

Sgt M.W. Maunsell

c/o SCE, Ardmore

Sgt B. Bull

Waiouru

L Bdr T.M. Rautahi

"

Sgt S.P. Richards

"

Bdr T.A. Sandilands

"

Bdr M.W. Morton

House 18, Waikune Prison Village,
National Park

Sgt P.L. Gray

Tauranga

Major General R.D.P Hassett

10 Cheviot Rd, Lowry Bay, Wellington.

FROM AROUND AND ABOUT: Bevan Culhane retired in March from the appointment of RSM, 16 Fd Regt, and intends joining the Public Service. He will remain a member of the Executive Committee.

Pat Duggan, RSM 3 Fd Regt also retired in March after 25 years with the RNZA. We wish both these members well as they sally forth into the cold, hard world.

We congratulate Peter Anderson on his promotion to WO1. Peter reports that Gunners appear to be taking over Papakura Camp with the following appointments: Commandant: Major R.J. Wasson, Adjutant: Capt B. Millyn; SO Log: Capt D.S.J. Dwane; Chief Clerk: WO1 P.R. Anderson; Barrack Master: WO2 L.G. Jackson, all of whom are also members of NZPFOCA.

Major Tom O'Reilly has returned from a course at the Military College of Science, Shrivenham, UK, and is now SO2 Plans, at HQ Land Force Command, Takapuna.

Frank Wood (18 Wing) had a slight scare with ticker trouble about two years ago, but is back at work part time - and subscribing to pill purveyors' profits like many others of us of similar vintage.

Angus Rivers is now CO, Base Area, Wellington, which includes Trentham camp and Fort Dorset and as he says, most of the odd patches of turf in the Wellington area where Army units operate. He looks forward to returning to the warm and friendly North.

Jim Gilberd, our Immediate Past President and Hawke Bay/Taupo Rep keeps a fatherly eye on his 'flock' - and keeps us well-informed on their welfare. His good lady, Dot, struck a bad patch recently, but we are all happy to know that she is now out of danger.

Ian Rowntree, our Thames/Coromandel Rep reports that Charlie Anniss still goes to sea as cook aboard the Spirit of Adventure, a regular event which he enjoys immensely. In a recent trip he called on members of his 'parish', including Charlie, and reports 'Hobby' Hobson in fine fettle after the 10 Wing reunion, Bruce Tolson well except a painful interview with the dentist strained his sense of humour somewhat, and Bob Rudge reckons after paying subs to the Association since 1936 he should be made a Life member. I visited Bob myself recently; he and his good lady are well, and we think he has a point on the Life Membership business, which is to be considered at the next committee meeting. Fred Prior is well. Ian himself is well but has to watch what he eats. Don't we all !

Bill Sewell has been suffering from emphysema but still manages to get around.

Jack Cook sends his regards to Harold Nicholson, and wishes to know the names of some or all of the 'dirty dozen', the Artificers RNZA who formed part of the establishment resulting from the reorganisation of 1907 when the RNZE were absorbed into the RNZA. Can anyone help?

Ian (Slim) Cunningham is working for the IRD, Dunedin, and has three years to go before his second retirement. Sends regards to all who know him.

Jim Gibb's recent trip to Sydney to visit his daughter was by very bad luck marred by 11 days in hospital with severe bronchial asthma followed by four weeks' 'bed rest' but is now on the mend. His advice to others contemplating similar trips is to have adequate medical insurance, for his hospital etc bills came to over SNZ\$5,500!

Doug Dumbleton who practises as a Public Accountant in Lower Hutt reports that a forthcoming knee replacement operation may precipitate a long overdue retirement.

To Roger Wylde: I have amended the roll and promise not to make the same mistake again. Sec,

Bdr P. (Phil) Ness is now our Waiouru Rep.

Hobby Hobson from Te Aroha sent us a copy of the ¹⁹³⁹ written examination paper incorporating sections for promotion of Gnr to L Bdr, L Bdr to Bdr, and Bdr to Sgt, the subject being Organisation and Administration. It certainly brings back old memories, and will make an interesting addition to our collection of historical mementoes. Thank you, Hobby.

Frank Rennie's book 'Regular Soldier' is selling very well; Frank states the reviews have been kind, but he has gained the greatest satisfaction from resulting contacts and favourable comments from so many old coppers.

From all accounts 10 Wing reunion was a resounding success. Of the 19 members remaining 17 attended. Of the instructional staff George McCulloch, hale and hearty at 87, and Reg Foubister attended. Dick Healey was unable to be present through illness, nor was Jim Gilberd because his wife had been taken seriously ill.

Ron Rogers recently visited George McCulloch who was quite thrilled to meet one of his old 'boys' once again.

Bob Smith writes that he is enjoying a quiet life at Mt Maunganui apart from golf and a few trips overseas. He wishes to be remembered to all those whom he knows.

John Monk is organising a reunion of the Dunkirk Veterans Association in November. To anyone interested his address is Te Kawa, RD3, Te Awamutu.

Our Patron, Major General Walter McKinnon, informed us that the controversy over the re-naming of the A.C. Baths in Taupo is over. The Borough Council has dropped the 'Thermal Waterworld' title, allowing the complex to revert to its original name of A.C. Baths. The land on which the baths are sited is to be called Armed Constabulary Park, so that people now know what 'A.C.' stands for. It was surprising how many did not!

Vin Skilton writes from Mangakino with regards for the Association, and in particular for Eric and Patti Nutridge. Hopes to see us in Nov. 87.

Bruce McIver regrets he was unable to attend the 10 Wing reunion; business and illness in the family kept him in the South Island, but he hopes to be in Taupo this year.

Phil Calvert is enjoying an early retirement on the NSW Central Coast.

Gordon (Action) Williams, our Deep South rep reports all well - and he's thankful he lives on high ground! He has been made a Street

Kiwi gunners can still foot it with our brothers overseas. However, the cutbacks after Vietnam and the loss of senior and experienced personnel in recent years due to the major changes in conditions of service means that we are going through a very lean period in the senior ranks both commissioned and non-commissioned. I am heartened therefore, when tripping round the units to note the high quality of the youngsters now coming on. They are intelligent, mature and motivated in a thinking and professional way that makes them ideal material for senior appointments. They are a challenge of course, for their leaders and the staff who must set targets and support activities but the rewards of their achievements more than compensate for that. In an age where young people are so often criticised for selfishness and being self-serving it is quite shattering, and enormously heartening to encounter a young soldier who argues against his promotion until he has completed another experience at the more junior rank because he believes he will be better equipped for the future. When I am confronted with that sort of attitude any fears I might hold for our future evaporate. In short, so long as we can give these young people the resources they need the Royal Regiment will remain 'the last argument of kings'. Ubique.

THE NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSN

A SHORT HISTORY

By W.L. Ruffell

CHAPTER XI

TAUPO AND THE SPA HOTEL

As promised in Chapter X, here is the story of Taupo and the Spa, and how they feature in our history.

The borough we know as 'Taupo' was once called 'Tapuaeharuru' (place of echoing footsteps), and was officially so-called by the Armed Constabulary. All that part of the central North Island of which Taupo is the heart, was called 'Taupo nui a Tia', i.e. 'the great cloak of Tia', so-named by one of the early explorers, the great Arawa chief Tia, after a dark mark on a cliff (which may still be seen), resembling a rain cloak. The area is still called 'Taupo nui a Tia' by the Maori people to this day. The Pakeha settlers who followed the Constabulary adopted 'Taupo' probably because it was the easier to pronounce.

Early in the course of the New Zealand Wars of the 1860s Government agents realised that Taupo was an important strategic area, standing as it did in the centre of the North Island at the junction of tracks connecting the main centres of unrest. In 1869 they decided to act.

After the abortive Waikaremoana expedition against Te Kooti the same year the Armed Constabulary taking part were transferred to Napier. From there they marched to Taupo, leaving detachments on the way to establish fortified posts for support and to secure their lines of communication. They constructed redoubts along the route of the present Napier-Taupo road at Titikura, Te Haroto, Tarawera, Runanga, Pahautea, Opepe and Taupo. The men themselves carried out all the construction work, e.g. erection of timber stockades, store-rooms, barracks etc.

They also assisted in forming the first roads connecting the posts, roads which later enabled the pioneers to exploit the tourist attractions of the Lake and surrounding country. At the same time they helped erect the first telegraph line, and provided its first

operators and maintenance men.

The Armed Constabulary advance party which arrived in Taupo in 1869 camped at a pa occupied by friendly Maori on the west bank of the Waikato River near its outlet from the lake. However, relations became strained following an incident in which a Constable is alleged to have 'had one over the eight', and to have caused a fire. The AC then moved to the opposite of the river.

In a valley where the Spa Hotel now stands, called Otumaheke by the Maori and Lofley's Glen by the AC, the latter set up a depot. Edward Lofley was their Quartermaster, an ex-Navy man, a survivor from the crew of HMS Orpheus wrecked on the Manukau bar in 1863. They selected the site because by fencing off one end of the valley they could conveniently corral the horses, and the thermal activity provided an ample supply of hot water. Carpenters in the Force erected a number of buildings some of which are still in use as part of the hotel complex.

After Te Kooti's so-called massacre of the Bay of Plenty Cavalry detachment at Opepe on 7 June 1869, the AC, realising they could easily be ambushed in Lofley's glen, moved into Taupo. There they built a redoubt the remains of which with its original magazine of pumice blocks may still be seen near the Police Station. Lofley, however, remained at the depot, and must have secured his release from the Constabulary around 1870.

As Quartermaster he had permission to sell liquor to the troops, and continued to sell it to civilians as well on the strength of a canteen licence which apparently satisfied authority in those days. Thus he can be said to have been Taupo's first publican although he had only squatter's rights.

Lofley commenced to develop the glen into a spa by erecting accommodation and bathing sheds for folk who sought to relieve their aches and pains in the hot mineral waters which abounded, as well as from the stronger waters he purveyed in the bar. He must have been a persuasive type for when Mr William Fox visited the establishment after becoming Premier, Lofley obtained from him the right to the use of land enough to permit expansion of his facilities. Unhappily at this point everything in the garden ceased to be lovely.

As every businessman knows, expansion costs money, so probably for this reason Lofley raised the price of beer from threepence (3c) per jug (!) to fourpence. Naturally upset, the Constables quickly informed him they would buy their beer elsewhere - for by this time another pub had opened. Lofley countered by threatening to deny them the use of his bathing facilities, whereupon in true Kiwi fashion the AC told him what he could do with his baths - and forthwith proceeded to organise their own. Later opened to the public they became known as the 'AC Baths'.

At the site they chose, now called 'The Armed Constabulary Park', are situated the modern AC Baths, an extensive Lido-like complex. In the foyer of the main building may be seen the plaque presented by our Association in 1970; it features both the AC and the RNZA cap badges, and reads:

'This tablet commemorates those members of the Armed Constabulary who fell during the wars of 1867-1872 and was erected in their memory by the New Zealand Permanent Force Old Comrades Association in 1970'.

When visiting Taupo you should make a point of visiting the Park.

In 1871 or 1872 Joseph Joshua took over Lofley's establishment, and it was he who gave the Spa Hotel its present title. He converted the Orderly Room into a kitchen on to which he built an annexe for use as a dining room. The block once known as '26, 27, and 28' he made his own quarters to which he attached the first real bar. Joshua also improved the bathing facilities.

In 1886 he purchased a beautiful Maori meeting house called 'Tiki o te Tamamutu'. It was the second house of the name carved for the Oruanui chief Tamamutu, the carvings for the first having been buried with his wife after her death. Probably carved between 1850 and 1880, it is believed to be the last carved by the famous Arawa master-craftsman Wero, and one of the two examples of his art still in New Zealand, the other being at the Otara Marae, Rotoiti. It is the only privately-owned meeting house in the country, is protected by Act of Parliament, and forty years ago was valued at £10,000. Tamamutu sold it to Joshua for £150 after most of his people had moved to Taupo.

When first purchased the house was in pieces, Wero having died before completing it. When Joshua erected it on its present site he incorporated a quantity of new timber in its construction, but the main beams, the uprights, and all the carvings are originals. The top beam or ridgepole is unique; it has been adzed from a single piece of timber, the carving in the centre being part of the beam itself.

Fortunately the carvings have been well-maintained over the years; we are told they were never painted but originally treated with a mixture of haematite and pigeon fat. In more recent times they have been treated with suitable oil to ensure their preservation.

Timber for the sarking and walls was pit-sawn in Taupo, and delivered to the Spa for 10 shillings (5s) a hundred 'super' feet, i.e. the equivalent of 100 running feet (30 metres) of 12-in x 1-in (300 x 25mm) boards. So you can get some idea of how much the poor fellow at the bottom of the pit got!

The carved figures forming the uprights round the walls are said to depict important members of the Tuwharetoa tribe, each of whom will be seen to differ in moko and other bodily characteristics. In the place of honour at the far end of the meeting house facing the entrance is seated the first Te Heu Heu with one eye open and one shut, signifying that wherever he was or whatever he was doing, he always kept one eye on the tribe.

Joshua used the meeting house as a dining room, and it continued to be so used until 1935 when the owner, then Mr T.A. Heath, erected a new dining room in its present position behind the meeting house. The latter he converted into a lounge, action which met with the approval of local Maori chiefs and elders who were most unhappy at the house being used as an eating place. It seems they put a tapu on the house, for it had proved very difficult to get Maori women to work as waitresses. After Mr Heath's action the hiring of staff presented no problems.

Adjoining the lounge is the house bar in which hangs a large portrait of Trooper F.J. Healey who served in the AC in Taupo, and later in the NZ Permanent Force and the Police. Under it hangs one of his son, Captain R.J. Healey MBE, our oldest member. Both portraits were presented by the Association, and were much appreciated by the management who would appreciate others of historical interest pertaining to the area.

This chapter would not be complete without a further word on Opepe, one of the fortified posts set up on the Napier-Taupo road 18 km from Taupo, of which mention has already been made in this history. When Taupo was first occupied by the AC it was a subsidiary of Opepe which developed into a settlement of around 600 persons grouped about the Constabulary stockade. However, Taupo eventually became the principal station, and when disbandment of the AC Force began in 1884 most of the buildings at Opepe were sold, the occupants moved on, and the bush took over. Three of the buildings erected by the AC became the old Rangitaiki Hotel before it became a tavern and moved to its present position five kilometres closer to Napier.

Opepe is notable for its connection with our Association. Bill Stott, one of our members, while researching family history found that his grandfather, Louis Stott, served in the AC there in the 1870s. In 1955 our Auckland Rep 'discovered' another old Opepe hand, William Strew, living in Howick aged 100 years. Needless to say we made him a Life Member on the spot! Strew is one of the AC men recorded as having built the Magistrate's Court in Taupo in the 1870s. It is still in use as a hall, and stands behind the Police Station, a monument to one of the most versatile bodies of men ever to serve this country.

Unfortunately records of the early days and of men of the Force who endured them are scarce. Mr J.W. Birnie, one-time proprietor of the Spa and intensely interested in its history told me of a visit he once made to the Taupo Police Station in the backyard of which a pile of old AC records burned merrily. According to the Constable feeding the flames a 'new broom' had ordered him '.... to get rid of all this bloody rubbish'. People who are interested in their country's history are said to be mature; conversely, people who are not interested must be immature. It is a pity the latter appear to be in a majority in New Zealand where military history is concerned.

By making the Spa our reunion headquarters we are reminded of our past links with the Force from which came the foundation members of the Royal New Zealand Artillery. The hotel provides excellent fare, accommodation at a very reasonable tariff - and free access to the thermal waters Lofley once denied the AC. Also, we appreciate it because it is one of the few hotels with character still trading.

We look forward to meeting you there - before we grow too old!

This concludes the history of the Association.

ANNUAL REUNION 1987: Will again be held in Taupo over the week-end 14-15 November 1987. Further details will be issued in a later Newsletter. Mark these dates on your calendar NOW.

UBIQUE ETC: By a General Order of 13 Jul 1832 HM the King granted the Regiment permission to bear on its appointments the Royal Arms and Supporters together with a cannon and 'UBIQUE' and 'QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT'.

By a GO of 1 Jun 1833 the GO of 13 Jul 1833 was amended so as to make clear that 'UBIQUE' was a separate motto from 'QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT' and that the former was to be in substitution for all terms of distinction previously borne on any part of the dress or appointments of the Regiment.

Extract from Battery Records of the Royal Artillery compiled by Lt Col M.E.S. Laws OBE MC RA(Retd); Published by RA Institute. From the above note: a. The Royal Regiment has two mottoes, not one, and b. The date they were granted was 1832, not 1833 as sometimes quoted. We like to be correct. Best regards, *Wally Ruffell* HON. SEC.